

DUBLIN/DARLINGTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

May 18, 2011

Conowingo Visitor Center

Members Present: Rich Norling, Chair
Jane Howe, Secretary
Russell Kovach
Joni Nugent
Brendan Patton
Donald Thomas
Alan Thompson
Shirley Thompson

Guests: Billy Boniface
Barry Glassman
Bob Riley
Milly Riley
John Sauers
Fred Smith
Sgt. Kevin Thomas

After a tour of the facility and the new tranquility fountain, Rich Norling called the meeting to order at 7:08 PM.

Government Updates

Sheriff's Representative: Sgt. Kevin Thomas reported on crime in Sectors 100, 90 and 60 for the month of April.

Total calls for Harford County – 12,685 in 4/2011 down from 12,753 in 4/2010

			Dayshift 8am-4pm	Evening 4pm-12am	Midnight 12am-8am
Sector 100	April 2011	810	23%	30%	46%
	April 2010	905			
Sector 90	April 2011	643	28%	34%	38%
	April 2010	716			
Sector 60	April 2011	268	56%	31%	13%
	April 2010	247			

Sector 100 - There were 5 assaults, 3 burglaries and 6 thefts.

Sector 90 – There were 4 assaults, 4 burglaries and 4 thefts.

Sector 60 – There were 4 assaults, 4 burglaries, 1 homicide (suicide) and 1 theft.

Sgt. Kevin Thomas noted that the April statistics represent 6% of Harford's total crime in Sector 100, 5% in Sector 90 and 2% in Sector 60. He said the Sheriff's Office is stepping up enforcement of handicap parking places. He also urged everyone, once again, to please LOCK their cars no matter where they are parked. Click it or Ticket (buckle your seatbelt) and hand held car phone laws are being enforced. Passengers under the age of 16 need to be belted in the back seat. Enforcement of the new laws will impact student drivers with provisional licenses and the length of time it will take to get a permanent license if they are caught using a hand held phone and/or texting. Discussion followed about the equipment on a "tag reader" squad car and how they work.

Regarding an increase in drug use in the Darlington area, Sgt. Thomas said there were 30 deaths in 2010 in Harford County attributed to prescription drug abuse. This is both a local and national trend. Harford County now schedules collection days for unused prescription drugs. For environmental reasons, unused or expired drugs should NEVER be flushed down the toilet or dumped down the drain. Sgt. Thomas circulated a brochure on how to properly dispose of unused medications. Discounting the low and the high ages, prescription drug abusers are mostly white 18 to 32 year old people. Discussion followed regarding a specific situation in the area. Sgt. Thomas will talk to the individual and follow up.

County Council President Billy Boniface: County Council finished the budget last night. It becomes effective on July 1. There were 250 amendments! The tax rate is below the constant yield. However, several local projects remain intact: Darlington Park and a feasibility study for the local library. The local landfill will be capped. Delays are weather related and not due to budget shortfalls. Waste to energy has significant issues to deal with. Billy said that Scarboro landfill is still taking some trash and ashes are coming back from the waste to energy plant to cover the layers. HC will eventually need a transfer station for single stream recycling.

The Land Use Plan is ongoing. Billy said the DDCC is the “top of the game” in what we have already submitted. Comments to the HC website are working well. The plan will be introduced to County Council in January. The Charter Review is next on the schedule. There was discussion about representation on the Redistricting Committee and possible legal ramifications including a ballot question.

Senator Barry Glassman: Even though environmentalists do not like it, Governor O’Malley will sign the Waste to Energy bill that will move this energy production to a tier one level.

Guest Speaker: Fred Smith, Shoreline Specialist for Exelon Corporation, welcomed everyone to the newly rehabilitated Conowingo Visitor Center. He gave a series of statistics on spill days per year; there are normally 35-40 but there have been 56 in 2011. The amount of water flowing down river has affected the fish lift operation for American Shad. If the river stays below 70 degrees, the fish lift can operate until mid June. The current license expires in 2014 and environmental studies regarding the Shad mortality rate show survival rate is high when adults come through the turbines. Fred mentioned that there is a heron rookery on the Cecil County side below the dam. Local Native Americans are permitted to collect Bald Eagle feathers. There will be an Open House at the pool and Visitor Center on June 16. All are welcomed. On June 11, from 9am to noon, the first Conowingo Pond Clean Up Day is scheduled to pick up trash and debris from four locations on the south west banks of the river. He said they no longer burn debris anymore, but haul it to be used as bio fuel or recycled as mulch. Four meetings are being scheduled for the end of June in various locations, Muddy Run, Port Deposit, Darlington, Chancellorsberg? Township, for a shoreline management plan on access to the river and a site management plan. Exelon will be upgrading signage on Route 1 to promote birding, photography and hiking in the Hopkins Cove area, but to discourage off road vehicles, drinking and swimming. The pool opens on Memorial Day weekend. There will be two additional tents, a video game room and a snack bar with an outside window for people who just want food. Exelon has trimmed the trees and installed security cameras to help prevent trash dumping. At the plant, they are working on overhauling the original spill gates. New cranes have been installed. They are replacing the rails and concrete. After Unit 11 is overhauled, Units 3 and 4 will follow. They are planning an Open House with tours of the plant.

In the discussion that followed there were questions about the merger with Constellation, the geographic boundaries of the re-licensing area, Exelon’s volunteer program and bird watching. Several years ago there was a weekly bird watching program at the Dam. Fred said he would work with any revival of the program. Several names were mentioned. Fred will look into it.

Regarding water connections for the DVFC, Bob Judge has asked for a proposal. The water tower will be taken down and there is room for a cistern on the Visitor Center property. There was discussion about a pumping station at the bridge on Broad Creek. Fred will talk to Bob Judge. Regarding a demolition permit for the last remaining house on the property that now belongs to DNR, Fred will talk to Nicole Merrick. DNR wants it down by the end of the year.

Regarding how much power is generated, at peak river flow 83,000 cubic feet per second generates 870 megawatts. Even at low flow, one or two units operate to keep oxygen levels up below the dam for the fish population. Since the dam will be 100 years old in 16 years, the question was raised about transportation across the dam. The State owns Route 1. There have been studies to build a bridge either above or below the dam. Fisherman’s Wharf cost \$4 million and is a very popular destination. There are no plans to re-open the cat walk for fishing purposes.

Review of Minutes: After one correction to the minutes that Nancy Reynolds was not on the ballot for School Board, Joni Nugent made a motion to approve the minutes of May 18, 2011. Donald Thomas seconded. Passed.

Old Business:

Aberdeen Water Permit – The permit has been re-applied for APG and is grandfathered. APG is also asking for HC water.

LNG Pipeline – no news

New members - There are still openings on the Council.

Future Guests – Jane Howe will look into scheduling a tour of the EOC.

Conowingo Village – see above.

New Business: None

Good of the Council:

~ The grass is knee high at the Verizon location on Main Street. Billy Boniface will take care of it.

~The old DVFC firehouse in Dublin has been sold to Chad Scarborough.

~ Donald Thomas asked how people felt about the civil defense siren. The old sirens have been replaced with electronic sirens in both Dublin and Darlington. There was general agreement that whatever was best for the DVFC was best for the community.

~ There is no building at Harley Davidson to mute the noise from dyno testing even though it was promised to the community some time ago. Billy Boniface and Sgt. Thomas will check into it. There is a noise pollution policy in place. Someone has to file a complaint. At some point it is out of the hands of the Sheriff's Office.

~ There is a rumor in Darlington that the scaffolding at the Whitlock Building will not be replaced and the building repaired.

~ The 21034 Community E-news may have inadvertently advertised a suspected pyramid scheme. Sgt. Thomas will look into it.

~Sgt. Thomas mentioned the May 13th memorial to Deputy Frank Bateman who passed away in the line of duty on June 10, 1899!

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 9:08 PM.

Next Meeting: June 15, 2011, 7PM at the Wilson Center.

Respectfully submitted,
Jane Howe